

THE MILLION DOLLAR MANTLE.

A Priceless Garment That Has Enveloped the Forms of Hawaiian Kings.

A valuable collection of Hawaiian feather war cloaks and capes is on exhibition at the National museum. One of the cloaks, the largest in the collection, is of immense value. It is known as the "million dollar mantle." It once enveloped the kingly form of Kekuakaa-ali, one of the highest chiefs of the Sandwich islands, in whose reign it was completed nearly a hundred years after it was begun. Upon the death of Kekuakaa-ali, who fell in battle, it became the property of his enemy, King Kamehameha III, by whom it was presented to Captain J. H. Aulick, of the United States navy.

The foundation of this most remarkable cloak is a network of olona or "native hemp," and to it are attached by threads of the same material feathers of native birds found only in the Hawaiian islands. The entire body of the mantle is made up of small red and yellow feathers, the latter ones being obtained from the Oo or Uho (Moo nobilis), a bird extremely rare and possessing but one or two of these yellow feathers which are found under the wings. This bird is captured alive by means of the "lime trap," and when deprived of the precious feathers is set at liberty. Great prize is put on these feathers by the crown. They are used as money in buying and selling, and are accepted by the government in payment of taxes. The red feathers are obtained from the most abundant bird of the islands, the Drepionis coccyzina.

In the "million dollar mantle" the feathers are placed so as to overlap, thus giving a smooth surface to the exterior of the cloak. The upper and lateral borders of the mantle are decorated with alternate tufts of red, yellow and black feathers, but only on the margin are the black feathers used, which are obtained from the Uho. In the center of the mantle is a large crescent shaped figure of yellow feathers, surrounded by a belt of red, which blends in the middle of the belt on either side with a succeeding stripe of red, the outer margins of which are divided by two wedge shaped processes of yellow.

From this last named figure on either side to the circumferences are alternate parallel stripes of yellow and red about six inches broad. The upper circumference of the cloak, where it fastens about the neck, is about twenty inches, the lower one being seven or seven and a half feet, thus forming a cloak capable of amply enveloping a very large person. The mantle is protected by a handsome case and its beauty advantageously displayed by a background of blue velvet.

There are two other capes in the collection, very much smaller, and two boas. The larger of the capes is little more than a collar, its upper and lower circumferences being about seventeen and sixty-six inches, respectively. The entire body is of yellow feathers, having but two small crescents of red in the center. The remaining cape, virtually a red one, has only two small designs of yellow feathers and consequently is much less valuable.

The boas made from the feathers of the Uho, are about two feet in length, and fasten about the neck with heppien cords.

The feather garments were at one time considered the greatest possessions of the crown, but the costumes of European and American manufacture have superseded them, and they are no longer manufactured on the islands.—Washington Post.

Letter Writing in America.

Americans are the greatest letter writing people on the globe. Of the fifty odd billion pieces of mail which are posted in the world every year nearly 3,000,000,000 go through the postoffices of the United States. We spend every year more than \$12,000,000 for postage, and during the year 1891 American tongues licked the backs of \$37,000,000 worth of sticky stamps.

The postage stamps sold every year the world over far surpasses in value the riches of Jay Gould or the Rothschilds, and the postage stamp industry of the world is one of the greatest factors in the machinery which moves the universe today. And yet postage stamps are of comparatively recent origin. It is barely fifty years ago since they were first used in England, and in 1847 congress first authorized their use in the United States.—Louisville Courier-Journal.

Biggest Umbrella in the World.

It is said that the biggest umbrella in the world has been made for the use of a west African king. The umbrella, which can be closed in the usual manner, is twenty-one feet in diameter and is affixed to a polished mahogany staff of the same length. The canopy is made of India straw, and has a score of straw tassels and a border of crimson satin. On the top is a pine shaped straw ornament which terminates in a gilded cone. When in use the umbrella is fixed in the ground, and under its shelter the king is able to entertain thirty guests at dinner.—Dry Goods Chronicle.

The Phoenix of Arabia.

In olden times a bird called a "phoenix" was thought to live in the deserts of Arabia. His lease of life was said to be 500 years, at the end of which time he built a nest of spices and fanned it into a flame with his wings. The flame reduced the bird to ashes, out of which he sprang to live another 500 years. Richardson says that he had fifty offices in his back, through which he sung melodious airs.—St. Louis Republic.

An Abbe's Retort.

Some of those terrible market women of Paris were "cheeking" the Abbe Maury good humoredly. "You speak like an angel, M. l'Abbe, but spite of it all you are a fool." "Quite right, mesdames," he replied, "but one does not die for that!"—Gentleman's Magazine.

Don't call the Chinese "Mongolians." It is better to reserve the latter name for the people who live north of China proper.

Preaching and Practice.

They were two bright women—one caller and the other hostess—and they had been discussing the value of temperance in eating as a means to prevent illness.

"I do not see," said the hostess, "that our boasted advance in civilization has been anything but a failure in regard to the preservation of health. With physicians better able than at any time in the world's history to cope with disease, this sudden snapping of vitality goes on all about us. I consider it entirely the fault of persons who do not take the care of themselves which their intelligence points out as imperative. I am always well, but it is at the price of constant denials of appetite."

"Yes," echoed the caller, "it must be so. I have to be firm in the matter of ice cream, which, wholesome for most people, is not so for me."

The hostess did not wait for this speech to be done. "Why, that makes me think," she said cordially, "I gave a luncheon today and there is some delicious banana cream going to waste down stairs. Can't you eat just a little?"

The caller hesitated. "Banana cream is my weakness," she confessed, "and—but the reader can guess the rest. The health discourse ended in an enjoyable round of banana ice cream, and the caller went on her way boldly to meet digestive consequences, while the hostess took her valuable food theories back to her embrace prepared to air them on the next occasion which presented itself.—New York Times.

A Revolt Against Tradition.

"The two greatest American delusions," said an observer of what is going on, "is cranberry sauce and pumpkin pie."

"In all recitals of turkey feasts we hear great stress laid on the cranberry sauce. For years I ate it out of regard for the customs of my ancestors. I pretended to like it, but I have come out as a rank rebel. I will have none of it."

"Pumpkin pie is quite as big a fraud. At the best a pumpkin hasn't any more taste to it than a turnip, and why it should be made into pie and treated as a dessert I don't know. I have talked about this thing confidentially among my most intimate friends, and many of them have confessed to me under a solemn pledge of secrecy that they don't like pumpkin pie or cranberry sauce either, and there is now a little coterie of us drawn very closely together. I can tell you, by this joint antipathy."

"I don't know what the New England club is going to do about it, but this rank treason is flourishing in their very midst, and before long there will be an Anti-Pumpkin Pie and Cranberry Sauce association that will make its influence felt."

A caterer said: "The gentleman you quote has never tasted the real article. He must have got his dislike to the dishes by devouring them at cheap table d'hotes, where they are rarely very palatable."—New York Herald.

Doorplates Out of Fashion.

How completely the doorplate has gone out of fashion. When I came to New York to work for a living, a doorplate was as essential an insignia of gentility as a bank account, and shops where they were sold were to be found everywhere. On the residence streets of the better class, at a certain hour every morning, you would see a servant on every stoop, polishing the plate up before its owner had his breakfast. The doorplate was with us what the marble front step is to a Philadelphia. Philadelphia's front steps are there yet.

Our doorplates have become things of the past, found only on old fashioned houses without pretensions to style. Their places have probably been taken by the coats of arms which fashionable New York now pays a Frenchman to invent or borrow for it, and which make the titled visiting foreigner rub his eyes when he finds his own crest over the door of a Wall street man of unknown origin or a railroad magnate of no origin at all.—New York Cor. Pittsburg Bulletin.

Destitute.

"What be you after now, Samu'l Payson?" inquired a brisk and thrifty Vermont farmer of a shiftless neighbor, who came shuffling across the barnyard one morning with as much of a business-like air as he was able to assume.

"I jest wanted t' know," replied the amiable Samu'l, with his usual vacillating smile; "I'm tryin' t' fix th' place up a little, 'gainst some visitors we've got comin, an' I jest wanted t' know if so be t' you c'd give me an empty barr'l o' flour t' make a hencoop t' put a pig in; for I ain't got nothing at all t' put nothin at all into!"—Youth's Companion.

Tropical Fruits in the United States.

There are now more than 500,000 almond trees actually bearing in the United States; there are hundreds of thousands of bearing coconut trees; there are more than 250,000 olive trees, producing fruit equal to the best Mediterranean varieties; there are now more than 500,000 bearing banana plants, 300,000 bearing lemon trees, 4,000,000 orange trees and 21,000,000 pineapples, and the value of tropical and semitropical fruits grown under the American flag is nearly \$20,000,000.—Yankee Blade.

Knew It Was His.

Mr. De Avnoo—I saw our baby way around on a side street today. The baby should be kept in the park.

Mrs. De Avnoo—That's where she is. You must be mistaken.

Mr. De Avnoo—No, I'm not. Don't you suppose I know that perambulator that I paid sixty-two dollars for?—New York Weekly.

Aluminum and Old Brass.

The addition of aluminum when smelting down old brass and other metallic scraps is recommended. In this case an admixture of one to five parts of aluminum to 1,000 parts of the other metal is necessary.—Currier's Magazine.

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